



Curriculum Center for Teachers
Tokyo Gakugei Univ.

Creative Curricula & Teaching
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Two Years of Disaster Restoration: Revitalized Fukushima University — Running in Tandem with Students —

Hiroki Miura Fukushima University

An educational restoration project called "OECD Tohoku School", which is hosted by Fukushima University in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), is expanding. It is a huge project for junior high and high school students affected by the earthquake and tsunami disaster in three prefectures, Fukushima, Miyagi, and Iwate, enabling them to experience widely various workshops over two and a half years to grow up as people who take responsibility for the restoration taking place in the region. The task given to students by the OECD Bureau of Education was "to hold an event in Paris in August 2014 which makes an appeal emphasizing the attractiveness of Tohoku to the world."

The contents of the project to construct the event are the following: "Intensive Workshop", which consists of five workshops held in spring and summer with participation by all students; "Local School", which is to formulate plans of restoration in the region by local team; and four "Thematic Activities", "scenario", "industry-government-academia coalition", "communication", and "self-documentary".

About 100 junior high and high school students were gathered from 12 locales of the three prefectures. The first and the second Intensive Workshop sessions were held in Iwaki City respectively in March and August last year. The third Intensive Workshop was held in Kesenuma City in March of this year. After having returned to their local communities, the students are planning regional restoration projects from their perspective. A team was trying to revive area fruit production, which was hard hit by harmful rumors, by commercializing fruit jams and preserves in cooperation with the local JA agricultural board. In May of this year, 30 students and adults visited Paris for a preliminary inspection and secured the cooperation of several concerned organizations in support of the project.

Many students participated, later stating that "I thought that we have had the most painful experience. However, people in other regions had much tougher experiences, and even so are working so hard. I felt that I must try harder." It can be said that such inter-local cooperation is truly producing good results.

Establishing the management office in Fukushima University, our graduate and undergraduate students support the project as staff members. They are playing a very active role: giving guidance to students along with 15 on-site teachers; in some cases listening to students' problems which they cannot confide to anyone; and going to Local Schools to receive guidance. Most of them who are appreciated by on-site teachers and OECD are graduate and undergraduate students aiming at becoming teachers.

The project intends to create an education system that supports long-lasting restoration, not ending up a mere transient event. For that reason, not only does it depend on support from the outside; it also establishes industry-government-academia coalition for fund raising and to encourage the independence of disaster victims. Education is not only for the public sector. By cooperating with private sector entities such as companies and NPOs, innovations capable of addressing new problems will come about. Furthermore, that, different from conventional industry-government-academia cooperative efforts which pour funds of "government and academia" into "industry", the capital flows related to education and welfare must be more flexible, as they are in Europe. The project is also positioned as a challenge in terms of importance.

The affected area is widespread. Therefore, the project tries to share information, hold meetings, and form teamwork between distant locations with free use of various information tools such as tablet PCs, Skype, and Facebook. Furthermore, in the schools, each participant "creates with running" or "gives lessons with making a classroom." In other words, by overcoming trouble on their own, participants form a flexible ability to handle problems.

To support the difficult and lengthy project of restoration, 21st-century-style qualities are needed, including critical thinking and imagination, the ability to express oneself, an international mode of thinking, and cooperative ability. Furthermore, industry, government, and academia need to work together to create new education that goes beyond the restoration education, namely future creation-style education, and to produce a system to support the education.

Internal Visiting Professor of 2013 Has Arrived

I am Fumio Fujiwara, serving as a visiting professor from this academic year. My regular occupation is as a Researcher at the Department for Elementary and Secondary Education Research, National Institute for Educational Policy Research (NIER). It has been three years since I transferred to this current place of employment. Before that, I was working as an Associate Professor in charge of school management at the Graduate School of Education (Professional Degree Program), Shizuoka University. I think that three years after the transfer, I was finally coming to understand physically, of course partially, MEXT officials' thinking and conduct related to their work, the processes of education policy formation, and the ways of working at NIER.

After arriving at my new post at NIER, I have conducted research and study mainly on the placement, appointment, and training of teaching and other school staff, including teachers. I realized after moving to NIER that when working at the university I was unknowingly thinking about the placement, appointment, and training of teaching and other school staff from the university's perspective. After I was transferred to NIER, my thinking was shifting to the perspective of how universities were positioned while securing the university identity in the strategies for the placement, appointment, and training of teaching and other school staff used by appointers who have great authority and responsibility in terms of the life-long development of teachers. I have come to understand the fact very well that appointers are the primary agents training the teaching faculty and other school staff.

Another thing that I became aware of after transferring to NIER is that more information comes in to NIER from all over Japan than seems to be the case at universities. Regarding training of teaching faculty and other school staff, numerous practical examples also come to the attention of NIER staff. In accessing such information, I realized the depth of the excellent training practices (at the university level, the faculty level, and at the individual level) of teaching and other school staff in Japan. At the same time, I realized once again the actual situation by which the sharing of the excellent practices has not progressed among universities. I feel the necessity to promote networking among universities and among teachers by, for example, dispatching young teachers to universities that are developing excellent practices to provide opportunities to learn in an apprenticeship manner.

NIER also serves as the secretariat of the National Federation of Educational Policy Research Institutes, of which the members consist of education research institutes and centers throughout Japan. Consequently I have opportunities to be exposed to many practical examples of their teaching and other school staff training. The staff members of education research institutes and centers have problems in common with those of university teachers in many respects. I feel strongly that they should mutually mingle.



Meanwhile, I myself am investigating the placement, appointment, and training of teaching faculty and other school staff in Japan. I desire to think about how training of teaching faculty and other school staff in Japan under the "career-based" civil service system in which they are fundamentally employed for life and grow up through frequent transfers, which differs from a "position-based" civil service system that clarifies the duties and functions by position.

I also adhere to the pursuit of my research subjects, not teachers but teaching and other school staff. Among teachers in charge of teacher education at universities in Japan, there are apparently a few people who understand the content of work of the non-teaching staff such as school officers, nutrition staff members, and nutrition teachers, nurse teachers, and school janitors, and how their work influences the improvement of school education quality. The more complex the environment surrounding schools becomes, the more schools must be required to have diverse ways of thinking and knowledge inside of them, as well as having networking with outside experts. Of course, such necessity of the internal diversification does not directly engender specialization by profession, but I understand that the diversification of professions is progressing globally. Teachers must have the quality and ability to participate in team play with other professions inside and outside of schools, beyond team play with teachers. Teacher education must also re-orient itself as part of teaching and other school staff training, responding to such change.

Finally, I greatly appreciate being given an opportunity to study at the Curriculum Center for Teachers of Tokyo Gakugei University, which is the center of a research and practice network for teacher education.

Fumio Fujiwara
Senior Researcher
National Institute for Educational Policy Research

Sharing Experiences at the Curriculum Center for Teachers

Wallapha Ariratana, Saowanee Treputtarat, Pennee Narot, and Tanamwan Prasertcharoensuk
Faculty of Education, Khon Kaen University, Thailand

The six members of the Thai team from Khon Kaen University had a great opportunity to share the meeting with the team from the Curriculum Center for Teachers at Tokyo Gakugei University in April, 2013. The Khon Kaen University team briefly presented our pre-service teachers' training curriculum structure and the circumstances associated with education management in local administration. The presentation drew many questions as we realized how our curriculum structures differed so greatly. For example, Khon Kaen University pre-service teachers training lasts for five years, whereas Tokyo Gakugei University provides a four-year program. The education management in local administration cannot be compared. Furthermore, we had just learned that Japan has implemented full scale decentralization. In Thailand, we are continuing operations with partial decentralization.

However, the most interesting point we observed was the administrative structure of the curriculum center. One senior member of our team observed that a senior professor is the acting director of the center and the younger instructors carry out important assignments as the research project director, and editorial team for the newsletter. This point seems to reflect the vision of the leader of the center that we had not expected to see. Therefore, our senior member pointed out that the Curriculum Center for Teachers operates similarly to a modern organization in which the future leaders are trained and developed gradually by the present leadership. It is anticipated that the coaching approach must be extremely intense. The Khon Kaen team should learn from Tokyo Gakugei University in this respect.

As for lessons learned from visiting Tsuzuki Primary School and Nakagawa-Nishi Junior High School in Yokohama, the following can be concluded:

1. The Teacher Profession Development should be organized closely and collaboratively by the teacher education institute and schools. These two organizations are expected to share the benefits of Teachers Profession Development, as shown in the project between Attached University Schools and Tokyo Gakugei University.
2. Community is a key factor contributing to the success and sustainability of educational management. That point is evident in the case of Nakagawa-Nishi Junior High School. The community participated fully in solving problems and obstacles until the school came to be managed successfully.
3. The school climate is also a key factor contributing to student motivation. The students are motivated and happy in their learning, which is apparent in an Attached University School and Tsuzuki Primary School. The teachers take care of students as if they were their own children. The students are apparently quite satisfied in their studies.

In conclusion, I would like to say that our team from Khon Kaen University learned a great deal from the meeting with Tokyo Gakugei team and from visiting schools. We hope our continuity as well as relationships can develop and have a beneficial impact on the development of the teaching profession and research in the field for years to come.

Terminology of Teacher Education

Normal University

Teacher education institutes were developed in the early modern era, and "normal schools" (for elementary teacher education) and "higher normal schools" (for secondary teacher education) were established throughout Japan. The latter had a post-secondary education of standard, which brought about the issue of being raised to "university" status. However, the westernized university structure, which made it a principle to conduct specialized academic research based on academic freedom, and the normal school which took on the nature of norms and aimed at integrating knowledge, are mutually incompatible in principle. The issue became a large point of contention across Japan. There are many countries other than Europe where the establishment of "normal universities" was avoided. In Japan, university literature and science was established in 1929 based on Tokyo and Hiroshima Higher Normal Schools. In Thailand, a higher normal school in Bangkok was reorganized and redesignated as Srinakharinwirot University after the Empress Dowager.

In China, Beijing Normal University was established in 1923 based on Beijing Higher Normal School. Subsequently, numerous normal universities have maintained their solid position in higher education. Similar "normal universities" can be found in Taiwan. With that background, the oriental-style university model based on the tradition of "Shuyuan academics" is apparent, aiming at the cultivation of character. (Yasuyuki Iwata)



Sketch of TGU-NENU Joint Research Visit

In March 2013, I visited Northeast Normal University and observed a class of teaching English as second language. In this class, 3 students each gave a lesson for 15 min as a teacher, followed by a 15 min discussion about the performance they did with all students. The English class in China had a good tempo. It made rapid progress with the cycle of the compact explanation of necessary grammatical points, the checking of examples for writing using the grammar, and conversation-style practice in pairs. The simulated class had a good tempo, and the discussion of all students had a good tempo, too. Without being encouraged to make remarks by the professor in charge, students actively raised their hands and talked about good points of the student giving the lesson and the points that needed to be improved. After the performances of three students and the discussion, the professor in charge gave general comments, and the class ended. It is often pointed out that on-site teachers in China are not eager to improve classes. I wonder if they do such a cooperative development of their lessons as I saw here. Or is it in fact an ideal model of instruction development at the top university for teacher education? I thought that I wanted to know more about the climate of training at school sites in China.

(Kenji Maehara)

Sites Where Teachers Are Nurtured

Shingo Fukasawa

Principal, Koma High School (Yamanashi)
Member of the Advisory Board for the
Curriculum Center for Teachers

I worked at Yamanashi Prefectural Education Center, the main task of which is to train teachers, until the 2012 academic year. Moreover, I have been involved in school management at a high school site as a principal since April 2013. I would like to share some points from the perspective of “developing teachers”.

During this academic year, the number of teachers employed at Yamanashi prefectural high schools was only 20 in all. However, the employment situation of teachers is nothing new; it was 19 last year. It is a really straight gate. The average age of teachers in the school I work for is 47.7 years old. Of 45 teachers, excluding management, teachers in their 20s are four and those in their 30s are only three. Even the population structure in Japan is not as unbalanced toward the older generations as this is. The problem arises because veteran teachers are set to retire virtually en masse during the next 10 years or so; those who are now called young teachers will be thrust suddenly to the center of school management.

With the advent of this situation, the Education Center held new training, entitled “Mid-career Teacher Training”, three times last year. It was training on school management for teachers who were designated based solely on their age: 40 years old. We thought that there is nothing more important for teachers belonging to this generation than to recognize the situation and to enhance awareness from early on to address the situation.

In Japan, people tend to search for the causes of social maladies as rooted in school education. This

tendency becomes a factor in raising the levels of various demands for school education. In fact, it is a matter of course that schools have awareness of their missions and the recognition of the situation strongly and fulfill their responsibilities in addressing bullying, truancy, declining academic performance, corporal punishment, or whatever the current social concern might be. Consequently, “the improvement of teacher quality and ability” becomes crucial.

Speaking from my experience, teacher skills are upgraded primarily during practice on-site. However, this does not mean that off-site training is unnecessary. It is necessary to find the theoretical grounds to produce and support good practices. Nowadays, education centers are increasing experience-based and participation-based training and are putting efforts into the acquisition of skills that can be used immediately on-site.

Still, educational sites are important. Even though the unbalanced age structure has come to impede the “handing down of experiences”, there is no other place like the sites where teachers develop to a great degree. The basis of the teachers’ competency is teaching competency. Our school has a “mutual class observation week” five times a year and tries to improve teaching competency through the mutual review.

In addition, what teachers must have at school now is the capability of “cooperating” as a team to address problems. To develop that capability, groups of teachers of the same grade have a “case conference” once a week. Not leaving everything to a teacher in charge alone, multiple teachers, including both veterans and young teachers, consider how to teach through free communication and handling of a mountain of diverse and complex problems using “cooperation”. We are thorough in establishing such practices.

Practicing “cooperation” — it is a competency that cannot be developed anywhere other than on-site. In point of fact, that is the very reason for the sites themselves.

Events Calendar

Saturday, November 23, 2013

Workshop for Practicing Teacher Education

Saturday, December 7, 2013

The 14th Annual Symposium “The future curriculum of school and teacher education”

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